

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the opportunity given by the Examiner in her telephone call of March 13 to respond in writing to the requirement for restriction, for the purpose of making preliminary amendments to the claims and adding additional claims before the first action on the merits. Applicants also appreciate the setting of a three-month shortened response time.

CLAIM ELECTION

Applicants elect the composite system claims of Group I, claims 1-23. The election is with traverse, to the extent that method claims 24-34 (Group II) include, or are amended to include, all of the limitations of an allowable "composite system" claim. It is requested that when allowable subject matter is found in Group I, applicants be given the opportunity to rejoin method claims containing all the limitations of the allowed claims.

CLAIM AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS

Non-elected claims 35-44, drawn to a composition, have been cancelled without prejudice to applicants' right to file a divisional application directed to their subject matter.

Claims 2-6 have been amended to change "inert" to "refractory." This language is consistent with the remaining claims and the specification, e.g., at page 7, line 19, and page 10, line 17 to page 11, line 15.

Claim 14 has been amended to remove the word "active" with respect to the second composition and to include the limitation that the upper layer swells to form an open cell matrix to permit passage of gasses from the lower layer to

ambient. This language is consistent with the other claims, including claim 1, and with the specification, for example at page 7, lines 10-12.

Claim 16 has been amended to change its dependency and to replace "inert fillers" with "refractory material," making it consistent with its parent claim.

Claim 24 has been amended in the same manner as claim 14 to remove the word "active" with respect to the second composition and to include the limitation that the upper layer swells to form an open cell matrix to permit passage of gasses from the lower layer to ambient. This language is consistent with the other claims, including claim 1, and with the specification, for example at page 7, lines 10-12. It has also been amended to include "a step of embedding a mesh or fabric reinforcement in the system." This feature is found, for example, at page 8, line 9 to page 9, line 8 of the specification.

Claim 26 has been amended to recite the modification of the epoxy resin to flexibilize it, as described, for example, at page 12, lines 3-17.

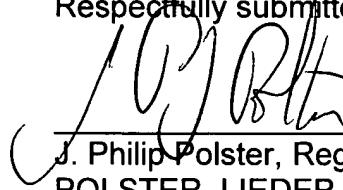
Claim 27 has been amended to change its dependency.

New claims 45-54 are all supported by the disclosure and are directed to the same general subject matter as the claims originally presented. They are dependent, directly or indirectly, on claim 1.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all the claims as now submitted are in condition for allowance, and such action is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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